

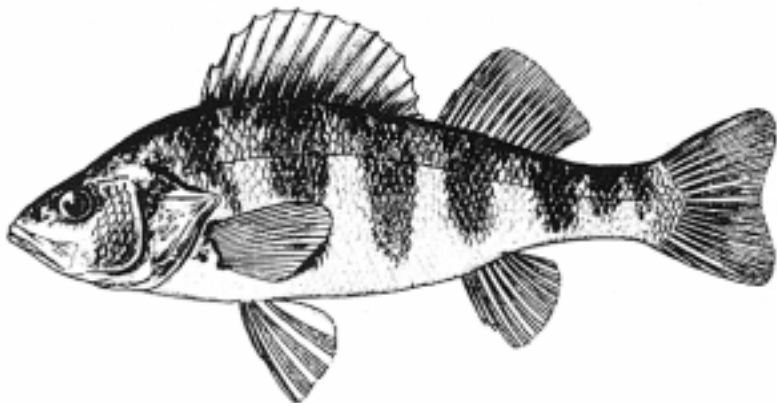
PERCH FAMILY—PERCIDAE

The true perch family is of minor importance to anglers in California. Two species occur in the State, but only one, the yellow perch, is a game fish. The group is characterized by a dorsal fin which is completely separated into spiny-rayed and soft-rayed portions, and an anal fin with only one or two spines.

Of the warmwater species, these fishes prefer the coolest waters. They occur in waters inhabited both by sunfishes and trout.

YELLOW PERCH

Perca flavescens



DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Body yellow or olive, with six to eight dark vertical bands. Usually does not exceed 12 in. in length.

DISTRIBUTION IN CALIFORNIA

The yellow perch was first introduced in 1891 from Illinois into Lake Cuyamaca, San Diego County, where it failed to survive, and into the Feather River, Butte County. Several subsequent importations were made. By 1918, it was widely distributed, although not numerous, in the Central Valley. Presently it is seldom taken anywhere in this drainage. In 1946 it was discovered in the Klamath River, apparently having migrated from Oregon. It is now abundant in Iron Gate and Copco lakes, Siskiyou County, and in the backwaters along the Klamath River.

LIFE HISTORY NOTES

In its native range, the yellow perch frequently inhabits trout waters. It lives in lakes, ponds, and the quieter parts of streams. It spawns in the spring at temperatures from 45 to 55°F. Eggs are emitted in ribbons, which are often draped on twigs, stones, and aquatic plants.

Yellow perch often become stunted in small lakes. The Department has no plans to expand their present range.